

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final Office Action mailed July 27, 2005. Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1 - 23 remain pending. In particular, Applicants have amended claims 1, 10, 17 and 21. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action indicates that claims 10 - 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JDF Specification Draft Spiral 4.0. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In this regard, Applicants respectfully refer the Examiner's attention to the JDF Specification Draft Spiral 4.0 and, specifically, to Section 4.4 Spawning and Merging (page 92 *et seq*). As disclosed therein (*see* Figure 4.4 on page 93 and accompanying text), copying of a job ticket is performed to permit distributed and/or parallel processing of a job ticket, *i.e.* multiple job tickets are produced during the spawning phase. This is in direct contrast to the limitations recited in Applicants' amended claim 10.

In particular, Applicants have amended claim 10 to recite:

10. A method for controlling access to a stored job ticket by locking branches of the job ticket, *wherein the job ticket relates to a print job to be executed by one or more processors in an electronic network*, the method comprising:

identifying a branch of the job ticket;

receiving a branch access request from a processor, the branch access request comprising a job ticket reference, *the job ticket reference having been provided to the processor, instead of being provided with a copy of at least a portion of the stored job ticket, for accessing the stored job ticket*;

retrieving the stored job ticket using the job ticket reference provided by the processor;

providing the processor with access to the branch; and
locking the branch.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicants respectfully assert that the JDF Specification is legally deficient for the purpose of rendering claim 10 unpatentable. In particular, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited reference does not teach or otherwise disclose at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 10. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 10 be removed and that claim 10 be placed in condition for allowance.

Since claims 11 - 13 are dependent claims that incorporate the limitations of claim 10, Applicants respectfully request that these claims also be placed in condition for allowance. Additionally, these claims recite other features and combinations thereof that can serve as an independent basis for patentability.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action indicates that claims 1 – 3, 7 – 9 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the JDF Specification in view of *Bacon*. The Office Action also indicates that claims 4 - 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the JDF Specification in view of *Bacon* as applied to

claim 1, and further in view of *Silberschatz*. The Office Action further indicates that claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the JDF Specification in view of *Bacon* as applied to claim 1, and further in view of *McNally*. Additionally, the Office Action further indicates that claims 14 - 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the JDF Specification as applied to claim 10 and further in view of *Silberschatz* and that claims 17-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the JDF Specification and further in view of *Barkley*. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

With respect to *Bacon*, that reference appears to have been improperly applied for the purpose of rejecting the pending claims. In this regard, *Bacon* involves a method for limiting access of each of a plurality of operators having assigned activities in an overall workflow distribution, to computer resources needed to respectively complete each activity through a computer controlled interactive display interface. Clearly, such teachings are not relevant to processing of job tickets by “processors coupled to a communications network,” such as recited in claim 1, for example. It appears that the Office Action may be considering the “operators” of *Bacon* as corresponding to Applicants’ “processors.” However, Applicants’ “processors” are clearly computer-related components, as Applicants’ “processors” are “coupled to a communications network,” in contrast to Bacon’s operators, which are people.

Even if *Bacon* can be somehow broadly construed to be combined for formulating a rejection of the pending claims, Applicants’ amendments have rendered such rejections moot.

By way of example, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite:

1. An apparatus that controls access to a job ticket,
*wherein the job ticket relates to a print job request to be executed by
one or more processors coupled to a communications network*, the
apparatus comprising:

a work flow controller coupled to the communications network,
wherein the work flow controller is capable of defining a work flow
corresponding to the job request, and capable of defining the job ticket,
and wherein the work flow comprises one or more branches; and

a job ticket service that is capable of storing the job ticket and
creating a job ticket reference, *the job ticket service being further
capable of providing the job ticket reference to multiple processors
such that the multiple processors use the job ticket reference to
access the stored job ticket instead of being provided with a copy of at
least a portion of the job ticket*, wherein the job ticket comprises a
framework specifying the one or more branches, and wherein the job
ticket service locks a branch when the branch is accessed by a
processor.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering claim 1 unpatentable. In particular, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references, either individually or in combination, do not teach or reasonably suggest at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 1. In this regard, Applicants respectfully agree with the contention in the Office Action indicating that the JDF Specification does not teach sharing of a job ticket, but instead provides multiple devices each with a copy of the job ticket. However, Applicants respectfully disagree with the contention that *Bacon* teaches this feature as described above. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be removed and that claim 1 be placed in condition for allowance.

Since claims 2 – 3, 7 – 9 and 23 are dependent claims that incorporate the limitations of claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that these claims also be placed in condition for allowance. Additionally, these claims recite other features and combinations thereof that can serve as an independent basis for patentability.

With respect to claim 17, Applicants have amended that claim to recite:

17. A method for controlling access to a stored job ticket, wherein a plurality of processors compete for selection to perform tasks related to the job ticket, said method comprising:
defining one or more tasks to complete the job ticket, *wherein the job ticket relates to a print job* and comprises a node-tree having a plurality of branches, and wherein each branch of the plurality of branches includes one or more defined tasks;
receiving a request from one or more of the plurality of processors to access one or more of the plurality of branches, each said request comprising a job ticket reference, *the job ticket reference having been provided to the one or more of the plurality of processors, instead of being provided with a copy of at least a portion of the stored job ticket, for accessing the stored job ticket*;
retrieving the stored job ticket using the job ticket reference provided by each of the one or more of the plurality of processors;
determining if a processor is currently accessing one or more of the plurality of branches;
for branches not being accessed, determining if the requesting one or more processors is authorized to access the branches;
for branches for which access is authorized, copying information from the branches to the authorized processors; and
locking the accessed branches.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering claim 17 unpatentable. In particular, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references, either individually or in combination, do not teach or reasonably suggest at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 17. In this regard, Applicants respectfully agree with the contention in the Office Action indicating that the JDF Specification does not teach sharing of a job ticket, but instead provides multiple devices each with a copy of the job ticket. *Barkley* does not teach this feature either. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 17 be removed and that claim 17 be placed in condition for allowance.

Since claims 18 - 20 are dependent claims that incorporate the limitations of claim 17, Applicants respectfully request that these claims also be placed in condition

for allowance. Additionally, these claims recite other features and combinations thereof that can serve as an independent basis for patentability.

With respect to claim 21, Applicants have amended that claim to recite:

21. A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for controlling access to a stored job ticket, ***the job ticket corresponding to a print job***, wherein a plurality of processors compete for selection to perform tasks related to the job ticket, the method steps, comprising:

defining one or more tasks to complete the job ticket, wherein the job ticket comprises a node-tree having a plurality of branches, and wherein each branch of the plurality of branches includes one or more defined tasks;

receiving a request from one or more of the plurality of processors to access one or more of the plurality of branches, each said request comprising a job ticket reference, ***the job ticket reference having been provided to the one or more of the plurality of processors, instead of being provided with a copy of at least a portion of the stored job ticket, for accessing the stored job ticket***;

retrieving the stored job ticket using the job ticket reference provided by each of the one or more of the plurality of processors;

determining if a processor is currently accessing one or more of the plurality of branches;

for branches not being accessed, determining if the requesting one or more processors is authorized to access the branches;

for branches for which access is authorized, copying information from the branches to the authorized processors; and locking the accessed branches.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering claim 21 unpatentable. In particular, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references, either individually or in combination, do not teach or reasonably suggest at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 21. In this regard, Applicants respectfully agree with the contention in the Office Action indicating that the JDF Specification does not teach sharing of a job ticket, but instead provides multiple devices each with a copy of the job ticket. *Barkley* does not teach

this feature either. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 21 be removed and that claim 21 be placed in condition for allowance.

Since claims 22 and 23 are dependent claims that incorporate the limitations of claim 17, Applicants respectfully request that these claims also be placed in condition for allowance. Additionally, these claims recite other features and combinations thereof that can serve as an independent basis for patentability.

With respect to the rejections of claims 4 – 6 and 14 – 16, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited combinations are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering these claims unpatentable. In particular, independent claims 1 and 10 patentably define over the combination of the JDF Specification and *Bacon* because that combination does not teach or reasonably suggest at least the limitations emphasized above. The respective secondary references of *Silberschatz* and *McNally* do not teach or reasonably suggest these limitations either. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that these claims be placed in condition for allowance.

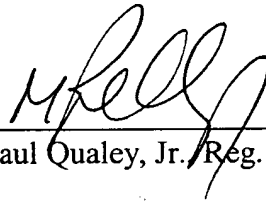
Cited Art of Record

The cited art of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

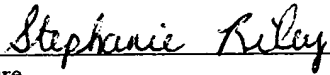
Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on

9/19/05



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